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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of :
Deborah MacPherson :
Application No. 10/803,040 :
Filed: 03-18-2004 :
Title: Context driven topologies :

ON PETITION

This is a decision on the petition filed January 10, 2007, requesting that the Office “black out” the social security number in the application papers.

On March 18, 2004, petitioner filed the present application. Petitioner mistakenly placed her social security number on the specifications filed March 18, 2004, and July 6, 2004. On January 10, 2007, petitioner submitted the present petition and a \$130.00 petition fee.¹ Petitioner requested that the Office redact her social security number from the specifications. The Office notes that the specifications appear in Image File Wrapper format.

The Office does not require an inventor’s social security number, and there is no need to include this type of personal information in a patent application. Furthermore, the inclusion of the inventor’s social security number is not important in deciding the issue of patentability. Therefore, the petition is granted.

The Office will not return the documents from the physical file because it is the Office’s policy not to remove papers from files that have been scanned. Nevertheless, when dealing with sensitive information mistakenly identified in patent application papers, the Office will make copies of the original specifications and will remove the social security numbers from the copies. Thereafter, the Office will scan the copies of the redacted specifications into the Image File Wrapper, and will use these copies for examination purposes.

¹ The current fee for filing a petition under 37 CFR 1.59 is \$200.00. Although petitioner submitted a \$130.00 fee for filing this petition, the Office finance records indicate that petitioner submitted a \$130.00 petition fee on July 6, 2004, to accept black and white photographs. The Office notes there was no requirement for a petition or petition fee to accept the black and white photographs filed on July 6, 2004. See 1213 O.G. 108 (Aug. 4, 1998) and 1211 O.G. 34 (June 9, 1998) and 37 CFR 1.84(b)(1). Therefore, the Office will apply the \$130.00 fee paid on July 6, 2004, toward the outstanding balance of \$70.00 for filing this petition. The Office will refund the remainder in the amount of \$60.00 by treasury check in due course.

Telephone inquiries regarding this matter should be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3211.

Christina Tartera Donnell

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